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Hundreds of Idaho Teachers and Administrators to Attend Educational Workshops

IDAHO FALLS – Idaho teachers are heading back to school this month to learn about energy, mining, forestry, water and climate, and space and technology and how to use that information in their classrooms.

More than 400 teachers and administrators are expected to attend one of four expense-paid science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) workshops that will be held around the state. The workshops are organized by the Idaho STEM initiative or i-STEM — a partnership of educators, government agencies, organizations and private companies working to improve STEM education in the state.

In its third year, the i-STEM workshops have doubled in size and attendance since 2009. This year, a fourth workshop has been added in Pocatello.

"Demand for the workshops is high and we are adding locations so we can reach as many teachers as possible," said Anne Seifert, executive director of i-STEM and INL's K-12 education coordinator. "We had more than 1,000 people register this year."

During the workshops, teachers choose a topic to study such as water systems, gold mining or healthcare. Then they attend sessions taught by experts and learn how to incorporate hands-on activities in their classrooms. General sessions aimed at broadly increasing STEM education in the classroom are also offered, and teachers receive continuing education credits and resource kits for attending the workshops.

"Today's workforce encompasses a technology and knowledge-based economy that is driven by innovation and creativity," said Seifert. "The goal of the institutes is to train teachers how to incorporate STEM into their lessons and reach as many students across the state as possible."

More than 85 organizations provided financial support for this year's workshops including JP Morgan Chase, Micron, Idaho Falls Power, Simplot, Agrium, Intermountain GAS, ICFL, Avista Corporation, Hecla, Idaho Power, Battelle Energy Alliance, (the contractor that runs INL), and others.

This year's workshops are scheduled for:

June 18-21 at North Idaho College in Coeur d'Alene.

June 19-21 at Idaho State University in Pocatello.

June 25-28 at the College of Southern Idaho in Twin Falls.

June 26-28 at the University of Phoenix in Meridian.

More information on the i-STEMs workshops can be found at www.sde.idaho.gov/site/istem.

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